



CITY OF HAYWARD
AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE 01/18/05

AGENDA ITEM _____

WORK SESSION ITEM WS #2

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: City Manager
SUBJECT: Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council review and comment on this report.

BACKGROUND:

At the November 16, 2004, City Council meeting, the Council approved the key elements of the Route 238 Corridor Improvement Project. As approved, along Foothill the project remains within the existing right-of-way from Mattox Road to the beginning of the grade separation at D Street. As part of the grade separation, Foothill dips beneath Mission and Jackson dips beneath Watkins. The improvements to Mission Boulevard south of the grade separation remained as previously described, with the addition of a left-turn-only traffic signal to improve access to Moreau Catholic High School. The concept drawings for the project are attached as Exhibit A.

As noted on the revised concept drawings, it is possible to construct a grade separation at Foothill/Mission/Jackson while minimizing right-of-way takes. However, it is not possible to provide a peak-hour parking/travel lane in the downtown section between A and D Streets as the existing right of way is only 100' versus 124' north of City Center Drive. In addition, with the new theater development, a left-turn lane at B Street is essential for improved access to the downtown. This latter project is under design and, as previously reported, will require permanent removal of parking from both sides of Foothill Boulevard from just south of C Street to just north of B Street. (See Exhibit A-1.)

As Foothill will not be widened, it is not possible to provide additional capacity improvements north of D Street, prompting the need to address how best to provide sufficient transition for the northbound Foothill traffic as the number of lanes decreases from four to three beginning at D Street. Since transitioning north of D Street would have either resulted in an extremely short transition of 250' (compared to Caltrans' standard of about 1100') or require additional right of way, the project calls for a "right turn only" lane at D Street. It is anticipated that under 2025 traffic conditions, having what is referred to as a "force off" right turn lane will cause some increased congestion as through traffic from Mission Boulevard merges to the left; however, this approach should reduce the tendency for northbound traffic to block the D Street intersection.

Two additional modifications are worth noting. First, to continue to provide access to Bret Harte School and the surrounding neighborhood, access to E Street from northbound Mission is maintained. Second, a right-turn access from eastbound Jackson to southbound Mission is found to be feasible, and reflected in the concept drawing.

Traffic analysis for the recommended project has not yet been initiated, but would be completed as part of the next steps in the environmental process. It is, however, expected that the Level of Service (LOS) along the corridor for the recommended project will yield fewer benefits than the modified project previously presented to the Council. Clearly, operational improvements are provided at the Foothill/Mission/Jackson intersection. While the project does not provide additional capacity on Foothill, it does offer additional capacity on Mission Boulevard, from the grade separation south to Industrial through use of dual parking, peak-hour travel lanes. The approved project includes spot improvements at Mission and Carlos Bee, and Berry Avenue is extended across Mission Boulevard, creating a full signalized intersection. As noted earlier, a signalized southbound left turn at Moreau High School is provided, which should greatly relieve the morning congestion in that area.

Overall, the approved project results in a significant reduction in right of way takes and estimated total project cost. Compared to the modified project that had 37 full acquisitions and 30 partial acquisitions, the approved project has 15 full and 13 partial acquisitions. The total estimated cost has been reduced from \$155 million to \$99 million.

After completing these preliminary steps in defining the approved project, it became apparent that although the project provides some congestion relief, future LOS analysis may show only limited improvements. Consequently, staff continued to look at methods to reduce traffic congestion without taking additional right-of-way along Foothill Boulevard, as directed by the Council. As a result, further consideration was given to the loop concept presented by CATS. While we do not believe it is advisable to utilize the full loop, a reduced version may have merit. Under a mini loop concept, Foothill becomes one-way in a northbound direction to A Street, A Street becomes one-way westbound between Foothill and Mission, and Mission becomes one-way southbound between A Street and the grade separation. We tasked our consultant to develop the manner in which each new intersection might be laid out and, specifically, how the grade separation could function with the one-way streets. The resulting concept plans are shown in Exhibit B.

Because the one-way couplets are confined to the downtown area where cross-streets are closer together and because the critical junction intersections, such as A/Foothill and A/Mission, can operate with fewer phases, staff believes the mini loop concept deserves further study. Because the mini loop concept will have very different traffic characteristics, it is difficult to estimate how it would compare to other scenarios already studied.

Should Council find that the mini loop concept has merit, staff would propose that some time be spent to further define the concept specifics and to conduct a traffic analysis to determine intersection levels of service. ACTA staff has been briefed on the mini loop concept, and they do not see any fatal flaws with the approach. Staff would also suggest that the concept be reviewed with the Route 238 Working Group in order to obtain their input.

The results of the technical analysis as well as input from the Working Group would then be shared with Council. It is assumed that this additional work could be accomplished within the next 30 days. Staff therefore requests Council authorization to seek a 30-day extension of the deadline established by ACTA for submittal of a project.



Jesús Armas, City Manager

Exhibits: A: Approved Project - Conceptual Plans
B: Mini Loop - Conceptual Plans